



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Solid Waste Division

December 2005

Class Act

School Recycling Program Newsletter

King County Education Programs Open for Scheduling

King County and the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program offer a variety of free education programs and materials for schools. Natural Connections and Waste Busters workshops for secondary schools and household hazardous waste presentations for grades 4-12 are still available. Visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/education/index.asp> and www.govlink.org/haz-waste for a list of programs, resources, and downloadable activities.

Shoreline School District Incorporates HHW into FOSS Curriculum

The Shoreline School District has integrated household hazardous waste (HHW) into its fifth-grade FOSS Environments Kit. With a grant from King County, Brookside Elementary teacher Patricia Shirley modified the lessons in the FOSS kit to incorporate the *Hazards on the Homefront* Teacher Guide and piloted the activities with her students. The new lessons, which address the science Grade Level Expectations, ask students to observe and write scientific experiments that deal with the effects of household hazardous waste.

As a result of this successful pilot, the Shoreline School District, with support from King County, is now including this material as part of a modified Environments/HHW Kit for use by all fifth-grade teachers. The new kits include ready-



to-use teaching materials that satisfy state mandated learning requirements, while also teaching how to identify household hazardous products, how these products enter our environment, the dangers associated with these products, and safer practices students can use. King County and the Shoreline School District provided a special workshop on the new material for fifth grade teachers in October.

King County is available to help other districts seeking to incorporate the topic of household hazardous waste into its curricula. For more information about the FOSS Environments Kits or other ways to integrate this material, contact Jennifer Howell at 206-583-0655 or jhowell@triangleassociates.com.

This material will be provided in alternate formats upon request.



'Tis the Season to Reduce Waste

In a national survey, 51 percent of respondents said they received a gift the previous December they had not used, or had thrown away. This year, give an experience, not stuff! As part of King County's Waste Free Holidays program, more than 120 participating businesses and organizations offer discounts of 15 percent or more on "experience gifts" - tickets, gift certificates or memberships for concerts, plays, sporting events, recreation, museums, restaurants, spa treatments and much more. The program runs

November 17 - December 31. Visit www.wastefreeholidays.com for details.



Think Globally. Save Locally.

EcoDeals.org, scheduled to launch in December 2005, is a new King County Solid Waste Division website designed to make environmentally responsible shopping convenient, fun and easy for county residents. EcoDeals.org will showcase products that are less hazardous to the environment, contain recycled or reused content, conserve water, or are energy efficient, with an emphasis on those that are locally made. Discounts and coupons will be available to King County residents and many will be found only at the EcoDeals.org site. EcoDeals.org will also be an excellent resource for extensive information on product performance and resource conservation benefits.



EcoDeals.org

Think globally. Save locally.

Green Team Report

A Green Team is a group of students who take action to become environmental stewards at school, at home, or within the community. Activities can focus on waste reduction, improving recycling, or promoting habitat stewardship. Already this year, six classrooms have started worm bins. At **Carnation Elementary**, Becky Panesko's fifth-grade Green Team serves as worm bin mentors to Elizabeth Wing's second/third-graders. Margaret Clinton's fourth-grade Green Team at **St. Francis of Assisi School** is educating the rest of the school about their recycling program. Sixth-grade teachers Diane Huseman and Janice Wilson at **Redmond Elementary** are working with their Green Teams to collect recyclables and expand their program to include additional materials. Kay Moilanen's fifth-grade Green Team at **Hazelwood Elementary** is creating a native plant garden with a walking tour brochure so others can learn about native plants and the habitat they provide.

To learn more about Green Teams and receive support and recognition for your projects, contact greenteam@triangleassociates.com or visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnr/swd/education/index.asp>

Grants/Fundraisers/Recognition

Starbucks Foundation Environmental Literacy Program

The Starbucks Foundation has initiated an environmental literacy program that provides funding to innovative local projects. For more information, visit <http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/grantinfo.asp>.

Raise Money and Help the Earth through the Staples Recycle for Education Program

Did you know that eighty percent of inkjet cartridges are thrown in the trash and that each cartridge takes 1,000 years to decompose? To help reduce this burden on our planet and raise funds for your school, the Staples \$25,000 Cartridge Chase challenges schools to form teams and collect empty ink and toner cartridges for recycling through March 1, 2006. The teams will receive \$3 for each eligible cartridge recycled and the team that collects the most empty cartridges wins \$25,000 on Earth Day 2006. Log on to www.staplesrecycleford.com to register a team and receive a welcome kit including flyers to announce the competition. Staples will provide prepaid postage for shipping the cartridges and an account number so the team can monitor the status of its collection counts.

WSRA Recycling Awards

Each year the Washington State Recycling Association (WSRA) recognizes Recycler of the Year in a variety of categories, including K-12 schools. Detailed criteria for award categories and nomination forms are available at <http://www.wsra.net> or by calling the (206) 244-0311. Nominations are due by March 1, 2006.

Washington Sustainable School Awards

Schools can receive a cash award from the WA Department of Ecology for waste reduction, recycling, resource conservation, and sustainability activities through the Terry Huseman Sustainable School Awards program. Schools can win in three categories: Sustainable School Program, Seed Award, and Creative Environmental Curriculum. Applications are due February 28, 2006. For more information or ideas to foster sustainability in your school, contact Michelle Payne at 360-407-6129 or mdav461@ecy.wa.gov, or <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/terryhuseman.html>.



Kids for Puget Sound Web-Based Program

People for Puget Sound has created a new web-based program targeted for kids between the ages of 8-12. The program provides a number of activities kids can do at home, at school, on the web, and in the field to achieve Puget Sound literacy, including knowledge of how their watershed works, the salmon cycle, and the variety of habitats of the sound. Find resources, games, and opportunities to ask questions and share stories at http://pugetsound.org/index/kids_passport.



Tune-Up Tips for Your School Recycling Program

Test your school recycling system to see if it needs a "tune-up." If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, follow the suggestions for improvement.

1. Do your classroom recycling bins overflow often?

- ☐ **Yes.** Then it's time for your school to increase collection frequency, use larger or more bins, or develop a new type of collection system.

2. Can you find garbage in your classroom recycling bin?

- ☐ **Yes.** If you see non-recyclable items such as paper towels, candy wrappers, paper plates, paper cups, napkins or tissues in your recycling bin, label it with a list of what can and cannot be recycled. Place the garbage can and recycling bin side by side. Ask your custodian not to line recycling bins with bags, since this can make them look like garbage cans which are lined to handle food scraps, gum, pencil shavings and other garbage.

Remind students what can and can't be recycled. Contact King County for written materials listing simple, effective ways to promote recycling.

3. Does the custodian empty garbage and recycling cans into the same collection container?

- ☐ **Yes.** Your school custodian may need to be informed or reminded that the recyclables are collected separately, and that the recycling bins should not be emptied into the garbage. If the custodian is discarding recycling due to contaminated recycling bins, students and staff need to be reminded about what can and cannot be placed in the recycling bins. Meet with the custodian to make sure that recycling

is a priority, and to discuss what is needed to get recycling back on track. Custodians often can pinpoint problems and suggest solutions.

4. Does your outdoor garbage or recycling dumpster overflow?

- ☐ **Yes.** If the garbage dumpster frequently overflows, this could mean that some recyclables are being thrown away. Typically, 47% of the waste schools generate is paper that can be recycled.

Once your school's recycling increases, you may be able to downsize the garbage dumpster to save money. Contact the person who handles your school's disposal bills if changes in service are needed.

- ☐ **Yes.** If the school's outdoor recycling dumpster overflows, you may need a larger recycling dumpster or more frequent pickups from the hauler.

5. Are recycling bins unused or barely used?

- ☐ **Yes.** Make sure the bins are accessible. Verify that they are not being used for storage of supplies, or hidden under a teacher's desk. To maximize recycling, label the bin and keep it in a visible location, preferably right next to the garbage cans located in each classroom and in each common or central area.

6. Are there printers or copiers that do not have recycling bins near them?

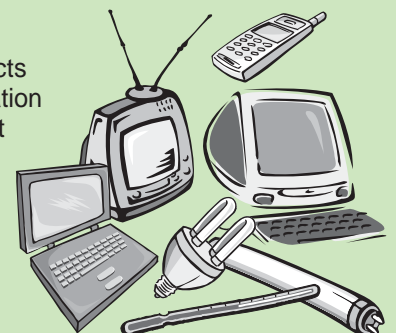
- ☐ **Yes.** Ask your school's custodian or your school district to order recycling bins for these high paper use areas. Also, make recycling convenient for staff by placing a large recycling bin in the staff workroom.

King County's School Recycling & Waste Reduction Assistance Program is available to: (1) help improve your school's recycling program; and (2) provide recycling bins and labels. Call Dale Alekel at 206-296-8457 or email her at dale.alekel@metrokc.gov.

Electronic Waste and Products Containing Mercury Banned from Garbage

Cell phones, computers, monitors, laptops, and televisions as well as some common products containing mercury can no longer be placed in the garbage or taken to the local transfer station for disposal. King County residents and businesses are asked to recycle their electronics at Take It Back Network member locations listed at www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/takeitback.

These electronics recyclers remove recyclable parts as well as toxic materials in an environmentally responsible way. Mercury-containing products that can no longer be put in the garbage or disposed at transfer stations include "button" batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, mercury switches, thermometers, and thermostats. Mercury-containing products can be recycled at private sector recyclers or household hazardous waste facilities. Call the Hazards Line at **206-296-4692** for locations.





Teachers Integrate Household Hazardous Waste into Native Plant Gardening and Other Projects

Brian Patrick, a science teacher at **Enumclaw High School**, and his students created a native plant and rock garden while studying ecosystems and proper disposal of hazardous waste. The garden acts as a living laboratory for biology and environmental studies students. Students use the garden to test safer alternatives to hazardous products, especially pesticides, on these valuable ecosystems.

Paula Konrady, a junior high teacher at **St. Luke's School**, also created a native plant garden with her science students. They've researched Pacific Northwest plants and are preparing to care for their garden without the use of chemicals which can have health and environmental impacts.

Teachers are incorporating household hazardous waste into their lesson plans in other ways as well. Some King County students are stenciling storm drains to protect surface water; others are creating mini-science fairs to display projects they have created about the effects of hazardous products. Sarah Orton at **West Seattle High School** incorporated the safe use, storage, and disposal

of household hazardous products into her child development class. Sara Graves from **Auburn-Riverside High School** is including safer cleaning alternatives in her Food Science classes. Carlie Jonas, a science teacher at **McKnight**

Middle School is using household hazardous waste in her unit on the difference between man-made and natural chemicals. Kelly Jensen from **Auburn-Riverside High School** is including a presentation on the hazards associated with personal care products in her Cosmetology class. These teachers all attended King County's *Hazards on the Homefront* teacher workshop.



Attend Hazards on the Homefront Teacher Workshops January or February

King County 4th-12th grade teachers are invited to attend a FREE Hazards on the Homefront workshop Saturday, January 7th or February 4th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Upon completion of the workshop, teachers will receive ready-to-use lesson plans and teaching materials. Teachers who complete the training qualify for clock hours, free follow-up classroom assistance and mini-grants. A stipend is available upon completion of workshop objectives. To register, please call Erin McGourty 206-583-0655 or email workshops@triangleassociates.com



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Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Solid Waste Division
King Street Center, Suite 701
201 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104-3855

Voice: 206-296-6542
TTY Relay: 711

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